(c) to (e) The funds for centrally sponsored schemes are released by different central Ministries who administer these schemes. As per the procedure, the concerned Ministries are required to respond to the points highlighted in the Audit Report. Reply of these Ministries on the irregularities pointed out in the report, duly vetted by "Audit" will be placed before the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament.

Gold

1705. SHRI N.S. V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total indigenous production of gold along with its value in the country during each of the last three years;

(b) the total consumption of gold in the country during the said period;

(c) the total import and export of gold and gold Jewellery during the said period; and

(d) the total quantity of gold confiscated during the said period alongwith its value?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The total indigenous production of gold in India during the last three years is indicated below.

(Year)	Gold Production (in Kgs)
1994-95	2369
1995-96	2036
1996-97	2904

(b) The gold imported into the country and the indigenous production of gold in India may be considered as a rough estimate of total consumption of gold in the country. The details are furnished in reply to part (a) & (c) of the question.

(c) The total import of gold and gold jewellery into India is as follow :

Year	Legal Import (in Tonnes)
1994	205
1995	278
1996	324

The value of total export of gold jewellery during the last three financial years is as follows:-

Year	Value (in US $ million)
1994-95	421.20
1995-96	480.40
1996-97	511.80

(d) the details of gold confiscated during the last three years is as follows:-

Year	Value of Gold confiscated (Rs. in crores)
1995-96	35.90
1996-97	44.50
1997-98 (up to May 97)	6.01

Foreign Exchange Dealers

1706. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA :

SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has recently been discovered that some licenced dealers in foreign exchange have withdrawn crores of rupees on forged documents;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the modus operendi of committing the fraud;

(c) whether the role of some Reserve Bank of India officials is also suspected in this matter; and

(d) the action taken by the Government against the offenders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Enforcement Directorate has taken up investigations relating to withdrawal of foreign exchange by some money changers/ authorised dealers suspectedly against forged documents. Adjudication proceedings have been initiated in five cases.

(c) and (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Cess on Export of Spices

1707. PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have imposed any cess on export of spices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there have been representations from exporters to remove this cess; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (d) Presently, cess on export of specified spices is collected under the porvisions of the following Acts:-